

19 Sept. 1946

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ANTIFA-SCHULE (POLITICAL SCHOOL FOR GERMANS AND POLES) IN CRACOW
(1 Feb - 28 Mar 46) AND OTHER COURSES

c) Sabotage and Explosives

Students were taught how to demolish bridges and factories with ordinary commercial explosives detonated by safety fuzes. They were also shown a number of booby-traps and time-bombs camouflaged in such things as gramophones, typewriters, watches and walking-sticks. The walking-stick handle, for example, was screwed off to reveal an indicator in the form of a disc bearing numbers up to 24. Pressure on the knob inside set the indicator to the desired number of hours. If the stick were then broken and thrown away, particularly in the neighbourhood of some highly inflammable object such as a petrol tank, it would start a fire. Portable typewriters and gramophones could be set to the minute and were reported to be extremely accurate.

d) Poison and Dope

They were shown two types of camouflaged syringes, one of the form of a fountain pen, the other in the form of a propelling pencil. When about to administer the poison or dope, the agent "prepared" the pen or pencil by twisting it round, as if getting ready to write with it. He then "accidentally" jabbed his victim with it. They also saw cigarettes and sweets which could be used to administer poison or dope.

e) Photography

They were shown the small Minimax camera which could be fixed inside the lapel of a coat, the lens being camouflaged as a badge or flower and fitted into the button-hole. Pressure on the side lever took the photograph. Larger cameras which could be used when there was no particular need for concealment, were also shown them.

f) Map-reading

Students were taught the meaning of the conventional map symbols, did route marches with only maps to guide them, and learned how to make sketch-maps. They were shown sketch maps printed on a double-texture silk handkerchief which looked perfectly innocent when examined in the hand, but revealed a map or sketch when held against the light.

g) Disguise

Students were shown complete mags, which looked rather like a balaclava helmet and were made of celluloid material. They were pulled on over the head and reached well below the collar of the shirt. The openings for mouth, nose and ears were pasted down. Though very painful to pull off or adjust, they were very effective. All the ordinary paraphernalia of disguise (false moustaches, hair-dye, etc.) was also exhibited.

h) Shadowing

They were taught how to shadow someone, either alone or as one of a team, the object being to get as complete a picture as possible of the man's habits. Details of his behaviour (e.g. whether he drank smoked, or was an early riser, etc.) were regarded as important, and the necessity of obtaining a specimen of his handwriting was stressed.

i) Weapon Trg

This subject was dealt with in a very superficial manner, as it was assumed that all the students knew how to handle firearms. They were shown how to handle automatics and ordinary MP's.

j) Formation of Partisan Groups

Former partisan leaders instructed the students how to set about forming partisan groups behind the front. In the lesson given, the students were told to imagine that the USSR was at war with GREAT BRITAIN and that they had been dropped behind the British lines. Their first task would then be to get in touch with the criminal elements of the population and, with the help of some vigorous propaganda, form them into an organized group. This accomplished, they would proceed to establish contact with the USSR. All their instructions were to come from the "Agentur". If they were given a specific task, such as destroying a Div HQ, they were to carry out the mission in British uniform. It was pointed out that, as it was dangerous to operate in large groups, their first organized band was to consist of not more than 20-30 men. Should any large-scale operations seem necessary, they were to be tackled only on the specific instructions of the higher HQ or Agentur. If an enemy formation was on the retreat, the agents were to operate with larger partisan groups and try to harass the enemy's L of C. Their main general task was to become acquainted with the enemy's movements, by tapping telephone wires, etc. It was further pointed out that, should they be committed during a war, they were to maintain wireless comm with the USSR HQ or NKVD HQ by which they were controlled: courier service would be impossible when they were behind the enemy lines.

k) Sport, Unarmed Combat

Students were taught Japanese wrestling and a high standard of fitness was maintained.

l) Parachute Trg

Although they did not make any parachute descents, students were taught the standard method of jumping with the aid of a jumping tower. They were shown parachutes and told that, if they were dropped behind the lines, the parachute was to be destroyed immediately.

m) Driving

They were taught how to ride a motor-cycle and drive a truck and received a certain amount of theoretical instruction. Most of them, however, already knew how to drive.